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ABSTRACT

This handbook provides an introduction to the Peace Corps for volunteers. It describes the medical, personal and financial matters that are taken care of before one enters the Peace Corps, the training period, and some of the volunteer activities. It gives guidelines for living in developing countries and addresses other topics such as living allowances, health, and transfer or resignation. (BB)

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PEACE CORPS HANDBOOK

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Peace Corps Handbook

Spring 1977

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YOUR SERVICE AS A PEACE CORPS VOLUNTEER

As a Peace Corps Volunteer you join a very special group of people. More than 135,000 Americans are devoting one, two or more years of their lives in service to others as ACTION Volunteers. Working in poverty areas of the United States and 69 developing countries in the world, they are helping people in need to help themselves.

ACTION Volunteers are working in the following programs: Peace Corps, VISTA, Foster Grandparent Program, Retired Senior Volunteer Program, Senior Companion Program, University Year for ACTION, Volunteers in Justice, and other development programs.

ACTION combines the best of the federal voluntary programs developed in America over the last 15 years. With imaginative and innovative domestic and international programs, ACTION provides an expanded opportunity for concerned Americans to address social and economic problems.

As a Peace Corps Volunteer you are beginning two years which will be very different from anything you have experienced before or will experience in the future. You should find it an exceptional opportunity.

How you become involved in and contribute to your job as a Volunteer depends, of course, almost entirely on you. Indeed, the aspect of Peace Corps service which returned Volunteers praise the most is its freedom; you will be making most of the decisions affecting your life and work overseas. This will not be an easy task to define, let alone carry out, for while the needs of a village may be as obvious as, say, an access road to market, the methods of working with people to fulfill these needs will require imagination, understanding and patience—and frequently a good deal of tolerance for frustration. Helping to solve problems which may be founded in the all-too-real barriers of time and tradition will be at once your challenge and your opportunity.

With this operational freedom will go responsibility. As the guest of another country, you will be expected to honor its laws and its customs. Experience has shown that to function best in the Volunteer person-to-person role, there are a few basic but important guidelines to follow. These include: living modestly, usually at the same level as your co-

workers; using public transportation; being deferential to the customs and value systems of the host country; and becoming involved in community activities beyond your primary job assignment. Finally, for obvious reasons, you must refrain from any involvement in the politics of your host country.

Overseas, you may be doing classroom teaching, helping develop community programs or be involved in some more specialized job in a field such as agriculture, business or health. But whatever your assignment, the prime factor in Peace Corps work is people. How you relate to them is what it is all about. The Peace Corps is for those of you who sincerely seek to understand the people you will be working with—to learn their language and culture—to vault the barriers erected long ago by geography and maintained today by differences in language, custom, political system and belief.

The Peace Corps is for optimistic, adventurous, concerned men and women who want to make things better for some of the less fortunate peoples of the world. As a Peace Corps Volunteer you will be personally serving as an example of how people can help to eliminate the hunger and disease, the ignorance and injustice and, above all, the hopelessness in which human frustration and conflict breed.

What will service as a Peace Corps Volunteer be like? The hard facts are difficult to state. Many returned Volunteers say that their principal challenge lay in adjusting to the frustration inherent in their assignments—the failure of people to respond as expected, and most important, the scarcity of tangible achievement.

Dramatic success is not unknown in the Peace Corps. Some of you will be fortunate enough to record clear and visible accomplishments. Others of you, however, may find it difficult to determine if you have even opened a single door or marked a single path. The significant thing to remember is that just your presence in the host country at an accessible level permits a dialogue with the people which previously did not exist. By being there, by showing concern for others, you give this dialogue urgency and significance.

What you can achieve is a genuine involvement with another culture and a relationship with people that no mere sojourner can have, no matter how long he or she stays. This close contact may well afford the greatest satisfaction of your service, for as in most human experience, what you derive from the Peace Corps depends on what you put into it. You will learn as much as your curiosity seeks and your openness to the experience permits.

There is no specific way of being a Volunteer. You will have encouraging episodes and discouraging ones. During the latter times your effectiveness and perhaps even your continuance may well depend on your motivation for service and the strength of your ideals and commitment.

The policies and procedures contained in this handbook are designed to help you prepare for Peace Corps service and as a continuing general guide for you overseas. During stagings and training, the staff will discuss these policies and procedures with you on a world-wide as well as a country-specific basis. You will have an opportunity to ask questions, to learn of recent policy changes, and to explore the history and rationale behind the policies.

UNITED NATIONS VOLUNTEERS

Some Peace Corps Volunteers are assigned to serve with the United Nations as UN Volunteers. The UN Volunteer Program, initiated in 1971, is a small, but growing international program that places Volunteers in projects of the UN and its specialized agencies. U.S. citizens may be recruited by the Peace Corps for this program; they serve with other UN Volunteers from around the world.

Unlike other Peace Corps Volunteers, UNVs are supported and supervised directly by the United Nations. Living allowance and medical care is furnished by the UN. The Peace Corps, however, pays for emergency leave and for readjustment allowance.

Many of the following policies and procedures are applicable to UN Volunteers because of their special status in the Peace Corps. UNVs should confer with the Office of Multilateral and Special Programs in Peace Corps/Washington for specific advice.

Elizabeth Gould is working at the veterinarian laboratory in Belize where she conducts experiments to improve the health of local animals.

THE FIRST STEPS

After the Peace Corps received your application, your references were contacted and other information about you was compiled. An assessment of this data led to your being invited to train for a particular project—one for which you are considered best qualified.

Applicants selected for programs are invited to a staging for a final briefing and to complete routine medical and administrative details before being accepted into training. You will receive necessary inoculations at your staging. These inoculations are required. Information obtained at the staging should help solidify your decision regarding Peace Corps. These stagings normally take two days immediately prior to departure for overseas training in the country or region of assignment.

Your preferences have been followed as much as possible, but not everyone can be placed in the job assignment or part of the world which is requested. During the period before you report for training, the Office of Volunteer Placement continues to accumulate information on your background. Program requirements, too, are subject to revision as more information comes in from overseas. While the chance is slight, a Peace Corps invitation may have to be withdrawn.

CHECK LIST

When you accept a training invitation, you are asked to take care of a number of formalities. Your rapid and accurate completion of these important requirements will help you avoid unnecessary delays in becoming a Volunteer. If at any time you are not sure of the procedure to be followed you should immediately contact the Office of Volunteer Placement or your Staging Coordinator. In all correspondence, please identify the program for which you have been invited.

☐ 1—Medical/Dental Exams

Medical/dental examinations

Your invitational packet contains instructions to have a medical examination at Peace Corps expense, either at a *federal facility within 100 miles of your home* or by a private physician, *the cost of which shall not exceed the authorized amount listed in the medical exam voucher, PC Form 209.* The examination results must reach Washington not less than *20 days* before the date you are to report for staging/training, so that any medical problems that might jeopardize your health can be identified before you leave home. *Please stress this requirement with the examining physician and ask him or her to expedite submission of this report.*

In many overseas locations no dentist is available and you may have to travel considerable distance for dental care. See your own dentist

early enough to have all needed work completed before training begins. A reporting form and detailed description of Peace Corps dental requirements will be sent to you for guidance. The Peace Corps will pay for necessary X-rays and screening, but the costs of *treatment* will be your responsibility.

Medical/dental processing of Volunteer families

All members of Volunteer families going overseas must meet health standards established by the Peace Corps. Generally, procedures for medical and dental processing are the same as for individual Volunteers. Exceptions will be handled on an individual basis. Follow the specific instructions you receive from the Medical Processing Branch.

Generally, former Volunteers re-enrolling and taking dependents overseas must comply with the same procedures for medical and dental processing as first-tour Volunteer families.

The Peace Corps pays for the physical examinations and necessary dental screening and x-rays for the Volunteer parents. The costs of treatment must be borne by the family. The Peace Corps will also pay for the physical and dental examinations of dependent children accompanying the family overseas.

Volunteers whose children will require active orthodontic treatment while overseas will be assigned only where the Peace Corps physician determines that adequate orthodontic care is available. The Peace Corps cannot pay for such care.

If it is determined that any member of the family who is to accompany a Volunteer overseas is medically or psychologically unfit for Peace Corps service, the family, of course, cannot qualify.

☐ 2—Social Security

Volunteers must be enrolled in the Social Security system. If by chance you do not already have a Social Security card, apply for one immediately through the nearest Social Security Administration office. Social Security taxes are deducted from your Readjustment Allowance each month.

☐ 3—Passports

When you receive an invitation to training, you also are given special "no fee" passport application forms. While the regular application fee has been waived for you because of your Peace Corps status, you may still have to pay a small processing charge. You must apply for this passport, even if you already have a regular passport. Your new passport and supporting documents you submitted to the Passport Office will be given to you at the staging. Peace Corps will have already obtained a visa for you. The international portion of your airline ticket will also be given to you at this time.

This "no fee" passport may be used for authorized travel while you are in the Peace Corps and for travel for not more than 90 days after you complete your Peace Corps service. If, after your Peace Corps service, you plan to travel more than 90 days, you should apply for and pur-

chase a regular passport from an American Embassy or Consulate. The cost is $12.

☐ 4—Voting

The Peace Corps encourages all Volunteers and trainees to vote in United States national, state and local elections. Bear in mind, however, that there are often special problems encountered in exercising your right to vote while overseas. Plan ahead by taking the following steps before you start training:

For four years, PCV Felecia Thacker has been making the study of science enjoyable for students and teachers in Sierra Leone.

More than three decades of farming and mechanical experience are put to good use by PCV Al Utt as he shows students how to repair farm machinery in Belize.

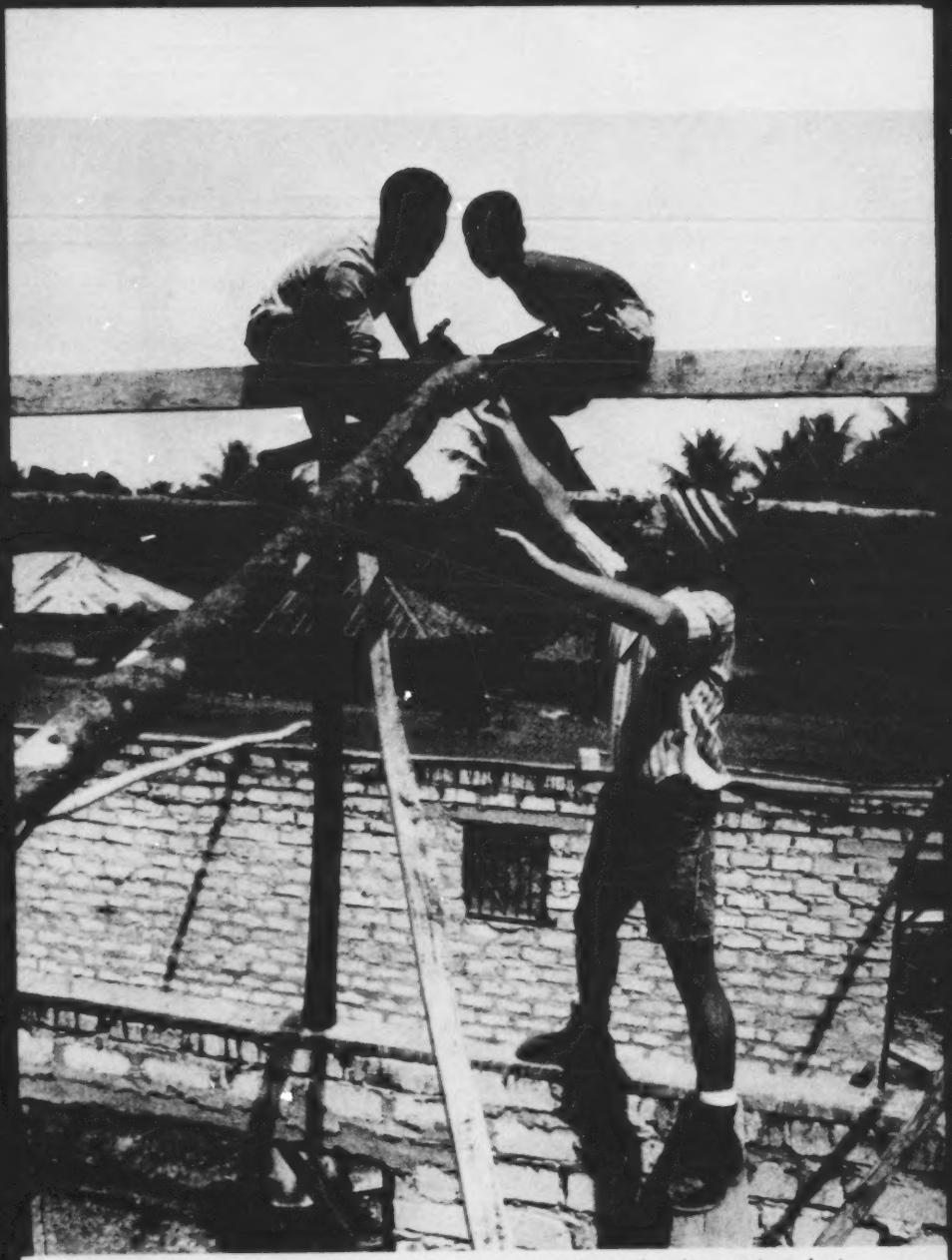
(a) Ask your local election officials whether you will be eligible to vote while overseas and, if so, how and when you should apply for an absentee ballot.
(b) Maintain a permanent residence address for voting purposes.
(c) Register to vote before entering training or, if this is impossible, ascertain whether absentee registration is permitted in your state.
(d) Make a note of your local election board's address to which all correspondence—including absentee ballot—should be directed.

In most states, Volunteers and trainees may use the Federal Post Card Application (FPCA) to apply for absentee ballots; this form, along with full instructions, will be provided by your Country Director, or Peace Corps Training Officer, in advance of national elections. Remember, though, that absentee voting is a privilege granted and regulated by the individual states, and filing a FPCA does not guarantee you will be able to vote in absentia.

If you have questions or special problems related to voting or registration, which cannot be resolved by training or overseas staff, you are encouraged to write to the Peace Corps Voting Officer, Office of Personnel Management, ACTION, Washington, D.C. 20525.

☐ 5—Personal and Financial Matters

Since much of the Peace Corps training takes place in the country of service, you should make arrangements to settle your personal affairs before you report for training. You should, however, delay selling your home, business, or car until you know definitely that you will be going overseas. To facilitate matters, you may want to grant power-of-attorney to a friend or relative to take care of these things for you.



PCV Dana Berner is assigned to a rice farm development project in Sierra Leone where he and his co-workers are constructing a cooperative rice store.

TRAINING

Training is an essential and integral part of Peace Corps service. While its primary function is to provide the technical and language skills needed for your assignment, training can also be viewed as the start of a process of inquiry, learning, and self-discovery which continue throughout your service as a Volunteer.

Training programs are conducted in the United States and/or in the country or region where you will serve. Training normally requires 8 to 14 weeks.

Peace Corps training is constantly in a process of evolution. While some time is still spent in conventional academic surroundings of classrooms and blackboards, you will often be asked to take a very active role in your training experience: to do some practice teaching, if education is your program; to participate in community development programs; to live and work in areas where another language is dominant. Time devoted to language instruction has doubled over recent years as Volunteers in the field have continually stressed the crucial importance of verbal communication with host country nationals.

Small group discussions and time for outside reading have increasingly been substituted for lectures. Instead of "courses" in area studies, world affairs, cross-cultural communication, technical skills and language instruction, a more comprehensive approach has emerged, with each part relevant to the other and to the life you will lead as a volunteer.

Competence in a skill and the ability to communicate are the most obvious prerequisites for satisfactory performance as a Volunteer. To do well in your host country, though, requires preparation somewhat different from that required for a similar job in the United States. For example, a Peace Corps nurse could have practiced nursing for years in America without ever having encountered diseases—or remedies—common to tropical areas such as Malaysia; an architect bound for Colombia would have to be familiar with *guadua*, a bamboolike material used for lathing.

The ability to communicate begins, of course, with mastery of your host country's language. So basic is this precept that it was spelled out in the Peace Corps Act, as passed by Congress: (Sec. 24) "No person shall be assigned to duty as a Volunteer under this Act in any foreign country or area unless at the time of such assignment he possesses such reasonable proficiency as his assignment requires in speaking the language of the country or area to which he is assigned." But communication is more than mastery of language; of paramount importance is your attitude and understanding of how to function effectively in a new cultural environment. Familiarity with the attitudes and values of those with whom you will be working is not simply a gesture of international goodwill but a vital necessity for doing a job well. For example, your attempts to help an Asian farmer triple grain yield through the introduction of modern farming methods may accomplish nothing unless you understand the forces that cause the farmer to resist change.

Basic to understanding others is an awareness of your own strengths and weaknesses. Ideally, your training experience will serve as a proving ground which will permit you to develop and test your own resources, affording you the opportunity to examine carefully your own commitment to the Peace Corps and its goals. During training, you will be challenged to play an active role in a process of self-education—as opposed to being a passive recipient of pearls of wisdom from "those who know." There will be times when you will be asked to decide how to structure a problem, not just how to solve one that has been posed for you—how to set and to meet objectives. You will be asked, in other words, to prepare for an experience in which you will have to supply much of the initiative and make many of the decisions.

Once at your post, you will see the need to constantly improve your technical skills, language proficiency and understanding of attitudes which make for effective working relationships; and here the mode may be as formal as workshop sessions or in-service language programs organized by your Country Director or as relaxed as reading and discussion sessions that you, yourself, initiate. In short, the training program is the first phase of a broader educational process which continues as you work overseas.

Training Allowances

When you arrive at the staging site you will receive a travel allowance to reimburse you for your expenses during the trip from home and to defer the cost of other incidental expenses.

During training, a modest amount of "pocket money" will be provided in addition to your room and board. In the event that room and board are not provided directly, you will be supplied with adequate funds for this purpose.

Bags and Baggage

Your baggage and allowance en route to staging/training within the U.S. is whatever is allowed by the airline you fly. When you fly overseas, you generally will be allowed 44 pounds of accompanied baggage, and the Peace Corps will pay for an additional 36 pounds of excess baggage to take care of both personal belongings and materials you may need for your job. Anything over 80 pounds will be at *your own expense* unless authorized for extensive amounts of job-related supplies. Excess baggage charges may run several dollars a pound.

Approximately a month prior to reporting for training, you will receive a suggested clothing and supplies list. Since the baggage allowance is small, you should carefully select those items suited to your particular needs, taking into consideration the suggestions for the country/area to which you will be assigned.

Avoid packing pressurized cans of shaving cream or hair spray in your baggage. Explosive or inflammable items are prohibited. Film could be prematurely exposed by x-ray procedures used for security purposes at airports.

PCV James Jones pauses to talk to a woman in Kpalime, Togo, where he is helping to build a school.

Customs Regulations

Before the staging, be sure to ask about host country customs regulations, which may prohibit the entry of certain items. Generally, those personal belongings which you carry with you will not be subject to import duty. After your initial entry, you will be subject to your host country's import duty restrictions on any goods brought in from another country or sent to you from home. Specific information will be given to you during the staging.

Before you leave the United States, you should take the precaution of registering with United States Customs any valuable imported possessions, such as cameras, which you are taking with you, to avoid their being subject to duty when you return to the United States. Returning Volunteers have no special customs privileges; they are subject to the same rules as other returning American citizens. Prior to your completion of service, you will be given specific information on United States customs and agricultural restrictions.

Life Insurance

When you register for training, your life will be insured for $10,000 and the premium of $1.00 per month will be automatically deducted from your readjustment allowance. If you waive or cancel this inexpensive and important coverage, it cannot be reinstated during your current term of service. You are strongly urged to consider fully the value of having life insurance. You must designate one or more beneficiaries and may change these at any time by filing the proper form with the Office of Volunteer Records in Washington.

Life insurance available to Volunteers is terminated when you leave the Peace Corps and cannot be converted to any other form of insurance. Coverage ends 60 days after the end of your Peace Corps service if you terminate overseas, and 15 days after the end of your Peace Corps service if you terminate in the United States. This allows you time to obtain other life insurance coverage if you desire.

Personal Articles Insurance

Before you depart for the country where you will serve, you will have an opportunity to insure your personal belongings at a low premium, paid either directly or through withdrawal from your readjustment allowance. Volunteers are advised not to take expensive personal items overseas as this would be inconsistent with the modest standard of living expected of them.

If any of your belongings are lost, damaged, destroyed or stolen during your Peace Corps service, you may have to sustain the loss yourself unless you are covered by insurance. The Peace Corps will reimburse Volunteers and trainees only under certain circumstances and in limited amounts. Generally, reimbursement is provided only if the Country Director determines that the items lost are of the kind for which Peace Corps provides allowances and that the items are needed for the individual to serve effectively as a Volunteer. You are given the option to pur-

chase Life Insurance and Personal Properties Insurance at the staging.

Student Loans

While you are in the Peace Corps, interest does not accrue and payments of principal may be deferred on any National Defense Education Act loan contracted on or after September 23, 1961. Forms to apply for deferment will be available during staging and overseas. These forms should be certified by the Country Director and sent on to the lending institution. You must renew your request annually for a loan deferment.

Although these provisions do not apply to NDEA loans outstanding on September 22, 1961, nor to other student loans, a lender may be willing to grant you a partial or complete deferment for interest accrual and/or principal payment while you are a Volunteer. Volunteers should in this case contact lending institutions directly, though the International Volunteer Support Services Branch will be glad to certify Volunteer or trainee status.

Medical Matters

As soon as essential medical information is assembled, the Medical Screening and Services Branch evaluates it to determine medical eligibility. Peace Corps medical standards are demanding but flexible. Each applicant's general condition is reviewed in terms of health hazards likely to be encountered during service. A limited handicap that might be aggravated by hazards known to exist in a particular area will probably rule out assignment to that location, but certain limited handicaps are not disqualifying *per se*.

With few exceptions, medical clearance is completed prior to the beginning of training. However, in a few isolated cases, the trainee may be sent overseas before this determination is made. In these cases, the medical personnel at the training site will evaluate the condition, make the decision to accept or reject, and inform the trainee.

If an applicant is disqualified either prior to being accepted into a program, or after the invitation has been extended, he or she may appeal the decision by informing the Medical Screening and Services Branch in writing and submitting additional medical information regarding the condition for which the disqualification was made. This new information, in conjunction with the applicant's entire medical record, will be reviewed by the Medical Review Board. This Board will make the final determination as to whether or not an applicant meets the medical fitness standards for Peace Corps service.

Generally, the Peace Corps will not assume the cost of treatment for a pre-existing medical problem detected during the training period. If you have medical insurance, it is advisable to retain it at least until your selection is final and the Peace Corps assumes medical and financial responsibility. Bear in mind, however, if you cancel your insurance, that

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the Peace Corps will cover you only for medical problems related to your period of service. Female Volunteers may wish to maintain insurance to cover maternity expenses incurred after service is ended.

During training you will be further instructed about health problems overseas and how to deal with them, and about the system that provides for your health care. You will be given the immunizations that are a legal requirement for overseas travel and for re-entry into the United States, and any others necessary for your protection. Notify the Medical Processing Branch promptly about any known sensitivity to immunizing agents or medications.

All trainees who wear eye glasses are requested to bring, at their own expense, a spare pair with them. All trainees also should be aware that contacts should not be worn overseas and that Peace Corps will not replace contact lenses. Trainees requiring visual correction must have at least one pair of eyeglasses.

The Peace Corps provides family planning information and makes available contraceptives to trainees and Volunteers requesting them.

If your physician advises you to continue taking a prescribed medication overseas, bring a supply sufficient for a period of six months as it may take that long for replacement supplies to arrive.

Qualifying During Training

There are no absolute indicators of a trainee's potential performance overseas. The main criterion is your potential for making a contribution to the host country. The training program is a process aimed at enabling you to become a fully qualified Volunteer.

Peace Corps Volunteer Lloyd H. Saito is the manager and business advisor for the Western General Coop Association in Gizo, Solomon Islands.

Some trainees become involved in the Peace Corps without being fully committed to Peace Corps service. Once they have come as far as the training program, they find themselves wanting to qualify simply because they don't want to be rejected. All through training you should be deciding whether you want the Peace Corps—whether you want to make this commitment, and can accept the responsibilities which it involves over a two year period.

Statistically, only one out of every seven applicants becomes a Peace Corps trainee. However, once you have received an invitation to training, the odds favor your becoming a Volunteer; on the average, three out of four trainees successfully complete training and qualify for Volunteer service.

Above all, think not about qualifying for its own sake, but about the unique combination of opportunities and responsibilities that you will face as a Volunteer. The Peace Corps can be two years of aimless groping, or it can be the experience of a lifetime.

Qualification Criteria

Peace Corps hopes that each trainee will become a Volunteer. Peace Corps trainers are responsible for working closely with all trainees to insure that each meets project-specific qualification standards, pre-established competency levels in areas such as:

1. the skills required for the Volunteer's assignment;
2. the language the Volunteer will use;
3. knowledge of the host country.

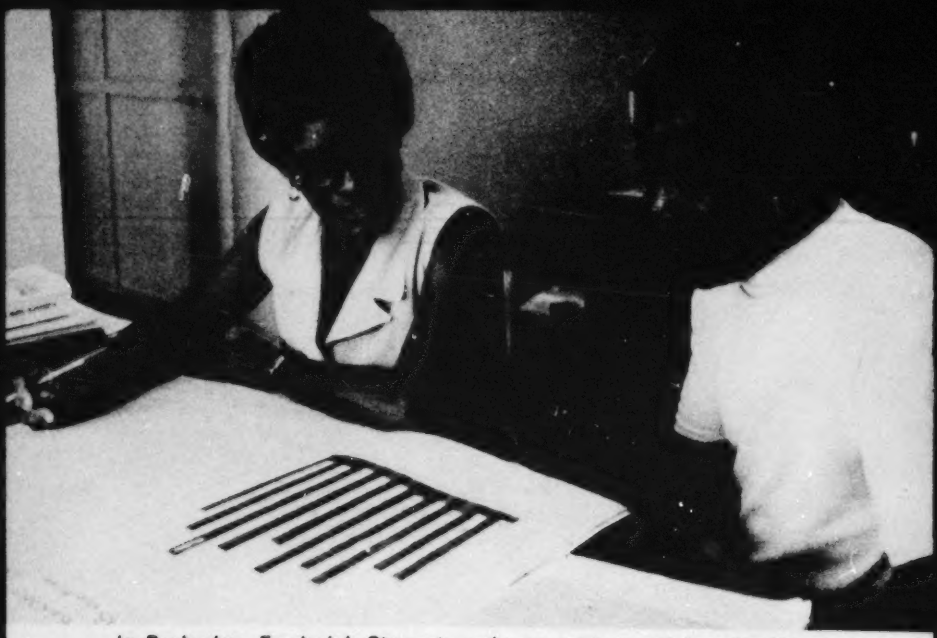
Trainees who do not meet the standards by the end of training may not become Volunteers. This happens infrequently. What happens more often is that some trainees decide against becoming Volunteers.

Except in occasional extreme cases, it is not possible to establish or to apply qualification criteria with regard to motivation, emotional stability or other personal qualities. Peace Corps expects, of course, that all Volunteers will possess the following attributes:

1. motivation which will sustain commitment to serve in the Peace Corps despite periods of stress;
2. intelligence sufficient to meet the demands of the assignment;
3. emotional stability and the physical vigor to maintain effectiveness under stress;
4. personal qualities such as initiative, determination, friendliness, patience, ability to communicate, and respect for others regardless of race, religion, nationality, sex, economic standard or political persuasion.

The Training Period

Judgment of an applicant in the above qualities and in skill competence has been made prior to training on the basis of written information on the applicant and, in some cases, interviews conducted at



In Barbados, Frederick Stewart works as a co-op advisor for the Ministry of Agriculture.

staging. The report of the Civil Service Commission on the applicant's background is the second phase of the qualifying process. The training program serves as the third phase.

Once training begins, the capabilities you demonstrate in all aspects of the training program will be assessed and evaluated against the requirements of the particular job for which you are being trained. There is no secret to qualification. Throughout the period of training you will be encouraged to participate in the process of assessment and evaluation. The training staff will stress a process of self-assessment whereby you will be encouraged to reach your own conclusions regarding the Peace Corps, your host country and job assignment and how you might best spend the next two years of your life. Approached in this fashion, your training experience should result in the maximum benefit to you, the Peace Corps and the host country.

As training progresses, you will learn more about your program and thus come to understand better what will be expected of you as a Volunteer. You may decide that the Peace Corps is not for you—many trainees experience such doubts during training. If you reason carefully and feel strongly enough to submit your resignation, your decision will be respected. For you to defer such a decision with the excuse that "I can always quit when I'm a Volunteer" would be an act of irresponsibility to yourself and to the host government which invited you on the expectation of your serving two years.

If you feel that your talents might be better utilized in another program, approval may be requested for transfer to a different training

project. It is the job of the training staff, including the Project Director, the Country Director or the Country Director's designee to provide every opportunity for you to be aware of and meet the qualifications deemed necessary for becoming a Volunteer in the country for which you are training.

You will qualify or fail to qualify based upon your training performance. Judgment of performance involves a dialogue between you and the training staff during which all concerned are working toward the goal of your attainment of the highest possible achievement in light of the training goals. Emphasis will be placed on the needs, demands, and expectations of the host country.

Trainee evaluation will be a continual process and will be your concern as well as the staff's. Having understood the standards of performance at the beginning of training, you will be able to work toward achieving them with the help of the country staff.

The entire training staff, including the project director and the language, cross-cultural and technical advisors, will participate in this final stage of the qualifying process through discussion with and feedback to trainees. The Country Director or the Country Director's designee, after reviewing and observing trainee performance, will make the final decision on those trainees who have qualified to serve overseas in a particular country.

Upon completion of training, all trainees who qualify for Peace Corps service are required to swear or affirm an oath of loyalty to the United States. This oath is a prerequisite to becoming a Volunteer and is prescribed by law. If you have any questions about the wording or meaning of the oath, consult a staff member during training.

Disqualification and Appeal

If problems develop which are beyond your control and country staff so recommends, transfer may be sought to a different training project. Similarly, the Training Project Director may conclude that gross misbehavior or negative attitude toward the Peace Corps will work to disqualify certain trainees. In such circumstances the appropriate individual will talk the problem out with the trainee involved before reaching a final decision.

If, for example, the decision is made to disqualify you, you will be informed of the general reasons for the disqualification by the person charged with making the decision. This is because usually no one specific reason can be identified as determinative except in medical cases.

A trainee who is disqualified may appeal in writing to the Director's Training Appeal Board, Office of Special Services, ACTION, Washington, D.C. 20525, within two weeks of notification of the decision, or appear in person, stating the reasons for disagreement with the decision.

The Board will review all material relating to the decision and will notify the trainee of its decision as to whether the original decision should stand or whether the trainee should be invited to a different training program.

Background Review

After you accept an invitation to enter Peace Corps training, the Civil Service Commission will begin an investigation of your background. In some cases, the Federal Bureau of Investigation may be involved. The investigation takes from six to twelve weeks and provides information which helps determine your qualifications for overseas service.

The investigators do not make decisions; they only collect data for the Peace Corps staff. If information is found which could disqualify a person on security grounds, the General Counsel of ACTION decides whether or not that person is to remain with the agency.

The background investigation may take longer if you have lived in many different places. If your background report is still incomplete by the time you finish training, your admittance into Volunteer status may have to be delayed.

PCV David Verstraete repairs heavy equipment and trains Sierra Leonian repairmen on a road construction project near Daru.

THE VOLUNTEER OVERSEAS

The first Volunteers overseas said there were two Peace Corps: the one they had read about or were told about, and the one they experienced. This is somewhat true today although significant strides are being made to correct this dichotomy. In the end, however, it is the experience itself which blends all you have read or been told with the task and people and vitality of your service.

The Peace Corps today encompasses a greater variety of skilled people than in the past, a greater mixture of younger, middle-aged and older Volunteers, and more exacting jobs for substantive, developmental projects. With these changes, it has become more difficult to generalize about the nature of the Volunteer's job and life overseas, but below are a few things to keep in mind.

Programming

Prior to your arrival overseas, the Peace Corps staff in concert with host officials will have done as much as possible to assure that you will have a satisfying work situation. This programming process is an essential preparation for the effective job placement of all Volunteers. Requests for Volunteers from our hosts are evaluated for their relevance to development problems and their likelihood of providing a Volunteer a high degree of satisfaction during service. Programming, therefore, involves not only an official request for Volunteers but also a great deal of discussion with host officials, the planning of material resources and monies, and the selection of specific objectives for each Volunteer's job.

You begin overseas on a specific job that has been as carefully selected as possible. You are assigned to a host country agency to work alongside other personnel who may or may not be doing the same work as yourself. Some of these people may be from other organizations like the UN, or private voluntary groups. You may also be part of a team of Volunteers from several nations. In sum, every effort has been made to ensure that your contribution to the nation's development is both significant and personally satisfying.

The Variables

This does not mean, however, that problems will not be present or crop up during your service. A catalogue of hazards would be endless. For example:

A host country supervisor, learning about the nature and role of the Peace Corps, enthusiastically requests Volunteers. But by the time the Volunteers arrive the supervisor has been transferred, and they find instead a hostile new supervisor who has heard only vaguely of the Peace Corps, is suspicious of foreigners and gives Volunteers little to do.

Or perhaps the supervisor is merely confused or uncertain about how to make use of the Volunteers. Or worse, two of the local staff teachers have returned from leave or half of the students have dropped out. In any case, the Volunteers aren't needed.

You may arrive on the job and plunge into it with all the zeal and ability you command; but instead of inspiring the admiration of your co-workers you seem to engender their resentment. They regard you as a rival for their jobs; they think you are putting on airs of superiority. Or you arrive in the classroom ready to pass the gift of learning to a bright-eyed, knowledge-hungry group of youngsters, only instead of craving education they mainly want passing grades on their exams. Instead of discussion and stimulation, they want you to write blackboard notes that they can copy and memorize.

You may find plans for the clinic you were assigned to were cancelled at the last minute because the Department of Health was reorganized; the well you were to dig is held up by a quarrel between local groups over who will provide the labor; or the outboard motors you were supposed to install and maintain for the village fishing co-op are not available in the country.

Such "variables" can erode the enthusiasm, the patience and the idealism which the Volunteer has brought to the job. Yet they may be part of a unstructured job in a developing country—and they form part of the basis of need which moved the host country to request the Peace Corps.

The excitement and adventure of the Peace Corps experience are in some measure due to its unpredictability. During your time overseas there will be unexpected joys as well as unexpected disappointments. By the law of averages alone, you are bound to encounter at least a few frustrations. As they mount, your success will depend on your determination, your patience and your ability to find another road when one is blocked. A big part of the Peace Corps is the challenge to remain energetic and hopeful at a time when your circumstances may counsel cynicism or indifference.

Attitudes

The change in attitude many Volunteers have after the initial novelty of living abroad has worn off is sometimes striking. The fire of enthusiasm they brought with them turns to ashes not long after they encounter the first misunderstanding, the first reluctance to change traditions based on the heritage of generations. Instead of attempting to affect the attitudes around them, however slightly, they begin to adopt certain attitudes which are contrary to the Peace Corps image. Often, for example, Volunteers will argue that they ought to live like their co-workers who may, in some places, have private cars and three-month-long vacations.

Such an argument can be difficult to answer. Yet, often a Volunteer's uniqueness in a community comes from his or her ability to forego co-

workers' benefits and still remain effective on the job. This may be precisely how that Volunteer begins to make a mark on those with whom he or she comes in contact.

When trying to change attitudes, you will usually be on solid—and safer—ground if your approach is that of setting a personal example. Your co-workers are free to emulate or ignore you, but they need not feel imposed upon.

Often, though, an attempt to change an established system of doing things will cause some boat rocking. Because a system may well serve

The ministry of Education and Cultural Affairs is the sponsor of home economics program where Sally Hoagland teaches cooking, sewing, sanitation and simple technology.

the convenience of your supervisor, or co-workers, or students, they may resent any direct attempt by you, no matter how tactful, to effect "improvements". If you press your efforts, there may be open resistance and protest; if you draw back, it will be hard to escape a sense of futility. The question can be critical and troubling throughout your tour of service, and there is no easy answer.

While a particular situation, a specific encounter, may prove frustrating, you can find encouragement in the fact that every host country has progressive individuals who want to see change as much as you do. Peace Corps Volunteers would probably not have been invited if host country

Shay De Weese, a PCV agriculture science teacher in St. Kitts, works in the school garden with her students.

officials had not expected them to seek new ways. So you must feel your way, introducing innovations where you can, deferring to your hosts at other times. Sometimes the opportunity for change is limited, but there will always be a certain number of people among your co-workers who will respond positively to the examples you offer.

Institutional Introspection

The Peace Corps takes seriously the need to reflect upon and judge its experience and to identify efforts which have been effective and those which have not. Everyone in the Peace Corps, including the Volunteer, is responsible to some extent for continuously assessing Peace Corps' activities, both in training and in service. Peace Corps' activities must be assessed in terms of relevance to our purposes and goals. Further, the impact of Volunteers' efforts must be measured in order to help determine the future directions of the programs.

Peace Corps evaluations take several forms. Those in which Volunteers participate directly include periodic reviews made by a Volunteer of work and progress in meeting the objectives of his or her project. These

reviews of activities are fundamental processes upon which the Volunteer and the Peace Corps rely to assess programs and make modifications as necessary. Two other forms of evaluation by the Volunteers are the Project Evaluation Questionnaire (completed at the end of training, mid-service and completion of service) and the Early Termination Questionnaire. These serve to assess such basic things as the effectiveness of placement and training, project support, staff services and programming. They help identify ways to improve future Volunteer service.

Periodically, the Director and perhaps others who know your work will be asked to rate the effectiveness of Peace Corps programs. You may be one of the Volunteers asked to assist by completing questionnaires, being interviewed or preparing a written report on your experiences. Again your full cooperation will help ensure constant improvement of Peace Corps operations.

If a Volunteer teacher participates in after-school activities with students, even though fellow teachers do not; if a Volunteer nurse manifests concern for patients and for sterile techniques that other staff nurses do not possess; if a Volunteer teacher displays concern for the substance of the work more than for the title and status; or if any Volunteer, no matter what the assignment, simply shows a willingness to get his or her hands dirty in a society which looks upon manual labor with contempt and distaste—this Volunteer, by personal example, will be making a contribution transcending the stated job assignment.

Obviously, your examples will not be effective if they are furnished self-righteously. There is an inherent appearance of arrogance in the posture of the stranger from another country who has come to bring "change" and "improvement". An automatic assumption that the American way is always best nullifies the spirit of working together as equals that is the basis of the Peace Corps. It also denies the truth that as you teach you will learn as much as your counterpart—perhaps more. Both of you, imperfect human beings, will have much to learn from each other.

In Barbados, Sheila Weiss and her co-worker examine hog cholera specimens at the Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory.

GUIDELINES: SOME FLEXIBLE, SOME NOT

Ways, Means and Mores

The Peace Corps and the host country regard each Volunteer as a responsible participant in the effort to make an effective contribution to the host country's development and to mutual understanding. You should always examine, within this context, your behavior and its effect on the important task you have to do overseas.

Basically, you are a guest in the host country. It is your responsibility to learn—and respect—its customs, manners, laws and traditions. What may be accepted behavior in the United States can be a flagrant *faux*

In primary schools and dispensaries around Notse, Togo, Diana Kirkpatrick teaches health and child care.

pas elsewhere. In some countries unmarried men and women are never seen together in public unchaperoned. In some instances even your eating and drinking habits may clash with local customs and taboos. Observing the health precautions that were explained to you in training may require a great deal of tact.

At the same time, you need not alter your personal standards of behavior in response to the particular setting in which you live overseas. Volunteers can maintain the integrity of their own values and still be effective in their assignments.

To your personal values you must add the special concerns the role of a Peace Corps Volunteer abroad makes necessary. Irresponsible behavior can have undesirable consequences for your work, your emotional well-being and your reputation. Such behavior will also reflect adversely upon the reputation of your fellow Volunteers, the Peace Corps and the United States. Along with the freedom that you are afforded as a Volunteer goes the responsibility of being a participant in the Peace Corps program. You should readily understand why, given the importance of the Peace Corps task overseas, energies should not be diverted to resolving and explaining the problems arising from less than responsible conduct.

Many other aspects of personal conduct may influence your effectiveness and reputation: your appearance, what you buy, the way you meet your financial obligations, the way you entertain. In short, you have the difficult and continuing responsibility as a Peace Corps Volunteer of being an exemplary individual in the eyes of your hosts and your fellow Americans.

Every society has rules by which its members are regulated and by which their behavior is judged. These rules may be applied to outsiders in subtle ways. For example, visitors are usually extended privileges exempting them from certain obligations: some of their foibles and fumbles are looked upon with amused tolerance. On the other hand, certain liberties of familiarity are almost never extended to strangers.

Volunteers living in a host country must be aware that even though they are there to offer help, they have the status of invited guests. They should be sensitive to the habits and tastes of their hosts without being constrained to walk on tiptoe. The consciousness of being a representative of the United States ought to be with you at all times. You can show respect for local customs and taboos without "going native." You can live modestly without living sloppily. You can explain America without propagandizing. You can represent the best in American tradition, remembering there are shortcomings in American society, too.

It is well to bear in mind constantly that whether on the job, traveling on a train or a bus or just walking down the street, you symbolize the Peace Corps and the United States. Whatever you do in the host country is not entirely unnoticed, even in the crowded cities. The Volunteer is not on exhibit overseas, but he or she is often under scrutiny. This means you must not only avoid doing many things, you must be sure your actions do not *appear* to be what you wish to avoid.

There will be many occasions when you will be asked or wish to explain American events and problems. You are likely to be most effective if you speak your personal beliefs and experience. Bear in mind, however, that the Peace Corps purpose is *service;* your equipment does

not include a soap box. In the end your behavior and your work, not your debating skills, will provide the best answer.

Personal Appearance

The Peace Corps has neither a uniform nor a prescribed manner of dress. Nevertheless, your personal appearance can reflect credit or discredit on you and the Peace Corps. This is true whether you are in training, traveling or on the job. Overseas, great importance usually is attached to neatness and proper dress, particularly in professional fields. You should dress suitably both on and off the job and respect host country attitudes toward personal appearance.

Items of personal appearance that frequently create problems for male Volunteers are long hair and beards: These may give offense to the host country and for this reason may be forbidden by some Country Directors. Troublesome items for female Volunteers may be short skirts, sleeveless or backless dresses or shorts or slacks, depending on local customs. It should be an easy matter, in any case, to find out from your staff members what is and is not appropriate dress in terms of typical host country attitudes and expectations.

Marriage and Pregnancy

Any trainee or Volunteer who wishes to marry and continue as a trainee or Volunteer must obtain in advance the approval of the Peace Corps. A talk with your Country Director at an early point in your decision-making is well-advised.

In deciding whether or not Volunteers can remain in service after marriage, the Peace Corps will consider such questions as: what job and housing changes will be necessary to accommodate them after marriage, and whether the required changes meet the approval of host country officials.

A Volunteer considering marriage to a non-Volunteer should remember that the Peace Corps cannot provide support of any kind, including health care (except as it relates to the birth of a child) or transportation, to a non-Volunteer. Before marriage to a non-U.S. citizen, a Volunteer should contact the nearest American Embassy or Consulate to check United States entry requirements for the spouse.

If Volunteers who are scheduled to end their Peace Corps service at different times marry, the Volunteer with the longer remaining period of service is still expected to honor his or her service commitment. Also, if the service of one Volunteer is prematurely ended, a Volunteer spouse will generally be required to leave at the same time. Generally, married Volunteers may not serve separately.

Volunteer couples expecting a child should notify their Country Director. The couple, the Country Director and the Peace Corps Medical Officer must consider health hazards to the mother and child, prospects for the couple's continued effective service as Volunteers and plans for supporting the family. If they do not all agree that the outlook is favorable

Architectural and structural drafting students in Sungai Pentani, Malaysia bene..t from the personal attention of their instructor, PCV Stephanie Degen.

from each of these points of view, both the husband and wife will usually be asked or permitted to resign, and the Peace Corps will bear the cost of their return transportation.

If a married trainee becomes pregnant during training, the Project Director should be promptly informed. If a pregnant Volunteer or trainee is permitted to continue her Peace Corps service, the Peace Corps will provide or pay for her pre-natal, delivery and post-natal health care. The Peace Corps will also provide or pay for the health care of a child born to a Volunteer during overseas service as long as the child is overseas with the Volunteer. Since the Peace Corps has no authority to provide health care to former Volunteers, Volunteers whose service is terminated before delivery are themselves responsible for post-service maternity expenses.

An unmarried volunteer who becomes pregnant may continue her Peace Corps Service only with the approval of the Country Director, and the Peace Corps Medical Officer, as well as the concurrence of the Regional Director, the Director of IO/OSS, and the Peace Corps Medical Director.

Approval must be sought within the first 15 weeks of pregnancy. Factors to be considered include the availability of adequate prenatal and postnatal care in the host country, the ability of the Volunteer to care for the child while she is working, the ability of the Volunteer to continue working effectively, and the mores of the host country.

A Volunteer who is considering terminating a pregnancy will be provided counselling upon request. With the approval of Peace Corps Washington, a Volunteer may be medically evacuated to the nearest location with adequate medical facilities which permits abortions under that country's law. All medical expenses for a Volunteer's abortion will be paid by Peace Corps. The Volunteer may be separated, or may be returned to duty if the Country Director decides that she will be able to serve effectively under the circumstances.

Philip Lu's official title is "Entrainer de Technique" at the Department of Youth and Sports in Senegal.

Relationships with Co-Workers, Other Americans, Other Volunteers

Only rarely is it possible to get along perfectly with one's co-workers. Don't expect your Peace Corps job to be different in that respect. Although you will form lasting friendships with some of the people you meet, occasionally you may also meet a petty tyrant of a supervisor or work alongside clockwatchers, gripers and others you cannot help disliking.

The ways people do things in your new environment may not be what you hoped for or expected and may prove exasperating. You should examine your own attitudes and try to understand those of your co-workers. Keep in mind that they are working for their living, and will be in the host country long after you have left. You will hear a great deal during training about getting along in a different culture. Demonstrated competence will usually win your co-workers' respect, and genuine interest in people and surroundings is usually reciprocated by host country people. It may take time to make friends, but it is worthwhile to try.

In your work as a Volunteer, you will probably become familiar with the work of other United States agencies overseas, particularly that of the Agency for International Development. Many AID technicians are highly experienced people who can be of great help to Volunteers. You will be briefed on the activities of AID personnel in your country of assignment, and on ways in which AID technicians and Volunteers can assist one another.

During your time abroad you may find yourself working and living with volunteers from the more than 20 countries with overseas voluntary programs. In addition, many countries in which the Peace Corps serves have domestic voluntary programs similar to VISTA. While the terms and conditions of their service will be different, these volunteers may have motivation and aims similar to yours. Contact with them can enrich your Peace Corps service through shared experience or discussion of diverse viewpoints on the needs, philosophy and methods of service.

Legal Status

Volunteers are not officers or employees of the United States Government, except for limited purposes, and do not have diplomatic immunity. Their legal liability usually does not change as a result of registration as trainees or enrollment as Volunteers. Thus, they generally are subject to state and federal laws while in the United States and to host country laws while overseas. This can have serious ramifications for Volunteers overseas who might become involved in such situations as automobile accidents or paternity suits, or who might be imprisoned for possession of drugs. It cannot be emphasized too strongly that while American Embassy officials have diplomatic immunity overseas, Peace Corps Volunteers and staff members do not; you will be treated in accordance with the local laws.

Political Expression

Since 1961, when the Peace Corps was founded, it has held steadfastly to an apolitical course. This policy is the keystone of the Peace Corps' larger long-term commitment to serve the peoples of our host countries and to serve them effectively. Because the Peace Corps and the individual Volunteers are seen and respected as being outside the political arena, they have been able to serve people whose governments encompass almost the entire spectrum of ideologies and alignments in the developing world.

At the Honiara Consumers Co-Operative in the Solomon Islands, David Buehler serves as a business advisor.

You are not required to represent official United States foreign policies, nor are you required to avoid discussing United States policies with host country nationals with whom you come in contact. This personal sharing of opinions and values is part of the person-to-person relationships which are vital to the Volunteer experience. Be sure, however, in stating your views that you do not leave the impression that you are speaking on behalf of the Peace Corps or the United States Government.

Also, you may express your views on issues relating to the United States in the American press; you may petition United States government officials as you could have if you had remained in the United States.

However, it is Peace Corps policy that Volunteer expression of opinion on political issues, whether relating to the United States or to the host country, may be made only in a private manner within our host countries. Any public political statements or actions by Volunteers overseas could create doubts and misunderstandings as to the Peace Corps' basic purposes within our host countries, and in some cases, such expressions could be used by political factions within the host country to inject you and the Peace Corps into local political controversy. These and other unanticipated reactions could damage your program and impair the effectiveness of the Peace Corps and Volunteers elsewhere. If the vagaries of international affairs make it necessary for the United States to take a position directly affecting your host country, it would become even more important for you to keep these considerations underlying the Peace Corps apolitical policy in mind.

You must avoid becoming involved in the political affairs of your host country. Think carefully about your conduct with respect to host country officials. The Peace Corps' commitment is not to the political forces of a nation but to its people, and its responsibility is to the agencies of government through which the people can be assisted. A Volunteer may develop personal sympathies for one faction or another within the host country, but any active expression of these sympathies could seriously compromise the effectiveness of the individual and of the Peace Corps.

A violation of these policies may result in termination. If you have any questions about the policies, write to the Office of the General Counsel, ACTION/Washington, or bring them up with the staff during training, or discuss the matter with your Country Director. If during overseas service you are considering any public statement or action which may involve political issues, or if you have questions about what is a political issue, first consult fully and frankly with your Country Director on the applicability of these policies and on the reasoning behind them.

The Press

People in both the United States and in the host country have the right to know what the Peace Corps is doing. The ACTION Office of Public Affairs carries the major responsibility for seeing that the public is informed. You are free to discuss your role in the Peace Corps with the press or anyone else—keeping in mind the responsibility that goes with the freedom.

Whatever you say or write for publication will very likely become known to your co-workers, to officials of your host country and to people in other countries where Volunteers are at work. What you say during your Peace Corps service—and even afterward—could be construed as an official opinion. Make it clear that you speak for yourself.

The care you take in private communication should be no less than the care you take in public utterances. Letters to your friends and family may be passed accidentally—or intentionally—to the press and become a public issue. An unfriendly press, either foreign or domestic, could use an ill-considered statement to embarrass you, the Peace Corps or the United States.

On the other hand, what you have to say, provided it is thoughtful and accurate, can contribute substantially to bringing to the United States a better understanding of another country. You are encouraged to write articles for publication but you should discuss them in advance with your Country Director or ask him or her to review what you have written, so he or she can advise you about problems you may not have anticipated. Remember that while you are a Volunteer you may not accept payment for anything you write or photograph.

Prohibition of Intelligence Activities

The Peace Corps has a strict policy regarding persons who have ever worked for an intelligence agency, whether military or civilian. The policy is that any person who has ever had any CIA connection is automatically

disqualified from Peace Corps service on the staff or as a Volunteer. Any other person who has done intelligence work within the past ten years is also disqualified from Peace Corps service. Any prior connection with any intelligence agency or activity, however slight, including an application for employment, must (if not already noted on the application) be reported to the director of the Office of Volunteer Placement for evaluation prior to training. Also, service in the Peace Corps overseas disqualifies any Volunteer or staff member from working for any Federal agency doing intelligence work for a period of at least four years following the association with the Peace Corps. Even if a former Volunteer enters military service, he or she will not be assigned to intelligence duty for at least four years. Under no circumstances are you to have any contact, written or otherwise, with any intelligence personnel or agency or activity during your training or Volunteer service.

If you have any questions about these policies, get in touch with the Office of the General Counsel, ACTION/Washington, or, if overseas, speak with your Country Director.

Religion

Volunteers are free to exercise their personal religious beliefs, but they may not engage in religious proselytizing or propagandizing activities, or otherwise express their religious beliefs in a way that impairs their effectiveness as Volunteers.

Drugs

The Peace Corps takes a very firm position with regard to the unauthorized possession or use of drugs or marijuana by trainees or Volunteers. Drugs or marijuana involvement is grounds for immediate termination from the Peace Corps.

Such activity is illegal in most host countries and Volunteers, of course, are subject to host country laws. Beyond this, the Volunteer's effectiveness could be seriously jeopardized. Public knowledge or even rumor of involvement with marijuana or other drugs could not only impair the individual Volunteer's ability to fulfill his or her commitment to the host country and the Peace Corps, but could also be damaging to the entire Peace Corps program.

Vehicles

Although the automobile is a way of life for many Americans, Volunteers must accept the fact that they will probably not have the use of a motorized vehicle. In a few cases a vehicle may be a tool that is necessary for the Volunteer to adequately perform his or her job. If a vehicle is necessary for job-related purposes, the Peace Corps may supply the Volunteer or group of Volunteers with an automobile or motorcycle for use in that job. If a motorcycle is assigned, a helmet will be included. Refusal to wear a helmet when assigned can be cause for termination. Four-wheeled vehicles are rarely assigned to Volunteers on a full-time basis.

The style of life of a Volunteer must communicate basic allegiance to the people of the host country and personal ownership of vehicles in most cases would tend to form a barrier between the Volunteers and the people with whom they are working and living. Vehicles that whisk Volunteers past houses, stores and villages appear to represent tourism. Volunteers who walk, ride a bicycle or use public transportation have much more reason and opportunity to become familiar with their communities on a personal level. Consequently, it is inappropriate for Volunteers to own or rent vehicles. Your Country Director will advise you in detail on the policy regarding use of vehicles within your host country.

Another reason against the use of vehicles is the dangerous driving conditions in many of the countries in which Volunteers are working. Accidents involving Peace Corps vehicles, in which host country persons or livestock are injured or killed, can cause damage to the entire Peace Corps program in a country.

Jane Keiser of Minneapolis works as part of a tuberculosis team for the Afghanistan Ministry of Public Health to try to prevent, control and treat tuberculosis.

In no case may Volunteers drive overseas until they are familiar with the country's traffic laws and are prepared to accept final responsibility for the vehicle and its operation. Use a host country driver's license in most situations, rather than an international driver's license which may not be recognized by local officials.

Should you be in an accident or any other emergency, promptly notify the Project Director in the training program or the Peace Corps Country Director or nearest American Embassy or Consulate overseas.

Firearms and Radio Transmitters

Trainees and Volunteers are not permitted to use or possess any firearms. Those who wish to hunt while on leave may request the Country Director's permission to rent or borrow weapons appropriate for that purpose.

Volunteers are not permitted to own or use radio transmitters (ham radios, shortwave transmitters, etc.) unless specifically provided or authorized by the Peace Corps Country Director.

Mail

Your personal letters and packages must be sent through the regular international mail, not via diplomatic pouch or Army Post Office (APO). Remember that overseas mail may be opened, delayed or lost.

Many countries have complicated rules limiting the number and value of packages that can be received. Before going overseas, or as soon as possible after you arrive, you should learn about these regulations and inform your family and friends. Because you are expected to get along on

PCV Margaret Salick works on termite control for the Malaysian Forest Research Institute in Kapong, where her husband, Francis Putz, is also assigned as a volunteer biologist.

your living allowance, and because of these regulations, you should discourage the sending of packages or money. Also, shipping costs and customs duties are often extremely high.

Be sure to tell your family and friends that packages and letters sent to you in care of the Peace Corps in Washington or to the Department of State for forwarding will be returned to the sender. The only exceptions to this policy are for items which are considered vital to the Volunteer's health or job performance, or when it is necessary to transmit important legal documents to or from the Volunteer. Prior approval of your Country Director or Peace Corps Physician should always be obtained before Washington will receive or forward health or job support materials to you. If you have approved mail or packages to be forwarded to you after your arrival in country, ask your Country Director about the appropriate procedures.

Gifts

In your host community you may see needs for various supplies such as medicines, textbooks, pencils or clothing. As a result you may want to seek gifts from friends or organizations in your host country or elsewhere abroad to help fill those needs. Before doing this, consider the ramifications of this kind of outside help.

First, see if local resources are available or whether you can help the community make more effective use of local supplies. This would be a far more lasting contribution than gifts from the outside which only temporarily alleviate continuing needs.

If nothing can be done locally, then think very carefully about soliciting outside help. Will this put you—or the Peace Corps—in the role of a Santa Claus in a way that inhibits self-help and possibly precludes your functioning as an ordinary member of the community? Will the gift create a dependency upon you or induce requests for additional help from you, the Peace Corps or other Volunteers in the area? All of these things have happened and have placed Volunteers in precarious and sensitive positions with their communities.

You can take precautions if you decide to go ahead and seek gifts. It is strongly recommended that no gift be sought for a community unless the community itself makes some contribution towards the use of the gift. For example, the Peace Corps' Partnership Program, whereby a United States school or community group provides money for self-help construction projects, requires that the host country community provide the land and labor and 25% of the project's cost in money and/or materials. (Country Directors have detailed information on the Partnership Program.)

Also bear in mind that the Peace Corps generally will not underwrite the shipment costs and customs duties for such gift items, and that the frequently complicated process of getting such items through customs will normally be your responsibility.

To ensure that you have fully considered the problems involved—especially the criterion of self-help—consult the overseas Peace Corps staff before requesting any gift from the United States.

LEAVE OVERSEAS

It is important that Volunteers gain a thorough understanding of the country in which they serve. Leave provides not only an opportunity for rest and relaxation but for travel in the country or region of your assignment; therefore Volunteers are normally expected to spend the first year's leave in their country or area of assignment. You should consult with your Country Director for specific policies *regarding leave* in your host country.

When visiting other Volunteers or staff members, be considerate. They may have been hosts to many others besides yourself. In some places even one guest can strain meager finances and the most ample good will.

The leave entitlement for Volunteers conforms, when possible, to the vacation leave policies of the appropriate host country agency. This leave may be up to a maximum of 48 days for a two-year term of service.

In most countries, the vacation leave allowance is included in your living allowance. You will be paid a total amount equivalent to $18 each month of Volunteer service. If you terminate before the end of your scheduled term of service, any unearned leave payments already made will be charged to your readjustment allowance.

Host country holidays which your co-workers observe may also be holidays for you without charge to your leave, unless you spend the time away from your duty station or the holiday period exceeds one week. In those cases, the holidays will be charged to leave unless you use week-long holiday periods for vacation projects. You will be expected to work on United States holidays on which your host country colleagues work. Weekends or holidays occurring during leave periods are counted as leave.

All leave taken must be reported to the Country Director. In many countries, leave of six days or more must have the advance approval of both your host country supervisor and the Country Director. To take leave for five days or less, you may need only the prior approval of your host country supervisor, but many Country Directors require that *all* leave be approved by them in advance.

To help ensure that leave becomes an integral part of your service, your Country Director may prohibit the taking of leave during the first and last portions of your overseas service.

While on leave, you will be permitted to travel to any place for which your no-fee passport is valid. While there is no restriction on leave travel, you should remember that one of the more important reasons for vacation leave is to acquaint you with your country and region of assignment.

There is no specific provision for sick leave, but time off will be granted when you are unable to work because of an illness or injury. If it seems likely that an ill or injured Volunteer will not recover within a short period of time, he or she may be returned to the United States.

Make sure your Country Director knows where you plan to travel on leave so that in case of a family emergency, for example, you can be

found promptly. While traveling outside your host country, you should inform the Peace Corps Country Director, if there is one in that country, the American Embassy, or the nearest American Consulate of your whereabouts.

COMMUNITY PROJECTS

Service in the Peace Corps is full-time. Except when actually on leave, you are expected to make yourself as available and useful to the host country as possible. This is the "something extra" that Peace Corps Volunteers bring to their overseas assignments. For schoolteachers this commitment is considered to extend to periods of school vacation or extended national holidays when schools are not in session. It is especially during such intervals in the assigned job that you can make additional contributions to your school, to your community or to some endeavor outside your normal purview. Volunteers have used vacation periods to help establish day camps, build roads, revise textbooks, set up libraries, conduct teacher seminars and make health surveys. Many are involved in the Peace Corps Partnership Program on a continuing basis, helping villagers to build needed classrooms and accomplish other community projects while establishing contact between citizens of the host country and Americans. Projects like these, and even more modest efforts, can bring the Volunteer closer to the community or to a new segment of the host country's society; they can make one more effective as a Volunteer; they can enrich the whole Peace Corps experience.

Such possibilities are as broad as each Volunteer's imagination and initiative. Projects become mere "make work" only if the efforts to plan them and carry them out are half-hearted and insincere.

Volunteers are encouraged to plan projects in groups as well as alone. The country staff can supply valuable information on both vacation projects and such long-term efforts as the Partnership Program. To insure feasibility of short vacation projects, they should be planned far in advance of vacation periods, allowing time to clear them with the Country Director as well as with the necessary host country officials. It is inadvisable to undertake projects which call for expenditures of money, especially when this entails seeking donations from host country citizens.

LIVING STANDARDS

The importance of living modestly overseas cannot be over-emphasized. In many places, what is most remembered about Peace Corps Volunteers is their willingness to give up things they are known to enjoy in order to work for values they profess to hold. In a sense this is the Volunteer's clearest expression of the spirit of service.

PCV Karen Myers teaches needlework as part of a secondary school home economics class in Bo, Sierra Leone.

This spirit of service should keep you from envying counterparts or co-workers who may have a more luxurious living standard than Volunteers are permitted. The practical value of modest living in the host country is obvious: it avoids artificial social barriers and places Volunteers on a more comfortable footing with people of modest means. In many instances it permits you to live physically closer to the people you are working with and helps you become part of the communities being served.

There is considerable variety, nevertheless, in Volunteers' living conditions, depending on such factors as the living standards in places of assignment, or the availability of local housing. In some countries the host government provides the housing and pays the rent—and the housing may be quite comfortable. But where there is any choice, the minimum standard is adequacy of shelter without risk to health; the maximum standard is comfort without ostentation. As much as possible, finding and renting living quarters will be left to each Volunteer.

MONEY MATTERS

Settling-in And Living Allowances

Your overseas allowances will be paid in the currency of the host country. When you are sworn in as a Volunteer, you may receive a settling-in payment to cover whatever you need to purchase locally to set up housekeeping. Purchases should be consistent with the modest living standards expected of Volunteers.

While overseas you will receive a living allowance, generally on a monthly basis. It will be sufficient to cover subsistence costs—adequate food, clothing, housing, utilities, vacation, transportation, and incidentals such as entertainment, laundry, film and postage. Allowances are based on local living costs and differ from country to country, or even within a country. They are subject to change depending on experience or changes in host country living costs.

You are expected to live within your allowance. You cannot receive payment for any work you may do while you are in the Peace Corps. Although receiving money from home to supplement your Peace Corps allowances is not prohibited, you should carefully consider whether increasing your personal comfort is worth a possible detriment to your relationship with host country people. You may not request a portion of your readjustment allowance as a supplement to your Peace Corps allowances; nor may you invest money within the host country or engage in any other activity for personal financial gain while there.

Readjustment Allowance

The primary purpose of the readjustment allowance is to provide funds during your transition from Peace Corps service to whatever you plan to

do on completion of your service. It is not intended as a deferred salary. As of April 1, 1976, all Volunteers accrue $125. for each month of service, which is held in their account without interest. This accumulation starts on the day you register for training and continues through the date of your actual termination. Unless allotments and/or withdrawals have been made, approximately $3,300. less taxes (depending on the length of your tour, including training) will have accrued by the time you terminate. Allotments and withdrawals can rarely exceed more than 50 percent of the monthly readjustment allowance. Deductions for Social Security and optional life insurance will decrease your monthly accrual accordingly.

One-third of the net amount in your readjustment allowance is available to you at the time of your completion of service to enable you to have spending money enroute home. The remainder of your readjustment allowance will be sent to your home approximately six weeks after your termination. Only under very limited circumstances may the final payment be received outside of the continental United States, Hawaii or Alaska.

Allotments and Withdrawals

Under certain limited circumstances you may authorize a part of your monthly readjustment allowance accrual to meet financial obligations incurred prior to Peace Corps service or, in an emergency, for obligations incurred during your service. Examples of both are payment of health, personal articles, or life insurance premiums, repayment of interest payments on educational or other loans, family support payments, costs of dental work in preparation for Peace Corps service, payment of income tax, and other genuine personal or family needs or emergencies. No such payment from this accrual will be authorized to supplement your living allowance or leave allowance.

Savings Bonds

One type of allotment worth considering, as it is the only permissible method for you to earn interest on your readjustment allowance, is an allotment for the purchase of U.S. Savings Bonds. Such an allotment may be initiated at any time during your service except during the last six months. A bond allotment applied for during training will not begin until after you have been enrolled as a Volunteer.

Bond allotments, which must be made for a minimum of five consecutive months, are for either a $25.00 bond ($18.75 per month) or for a $50.00 bond ($37.50 per month). As allotments and withdrawals can rarely exceed more than 50 percent of the monthly readjustment allowance accrual, a bond allotment of $62.50 will be approved only if you have no other allotments.

Bonds purchased by this process are not sent monthly to your home but are held in escrow in ACTION/Washington until after your termination. Thus, the funds committed to Savings Bonds will not be available for use immediately upon your termination but only when all completion of service documentation has been processed.

For further information, contact your Country Director.

Income and Social Security Taxes

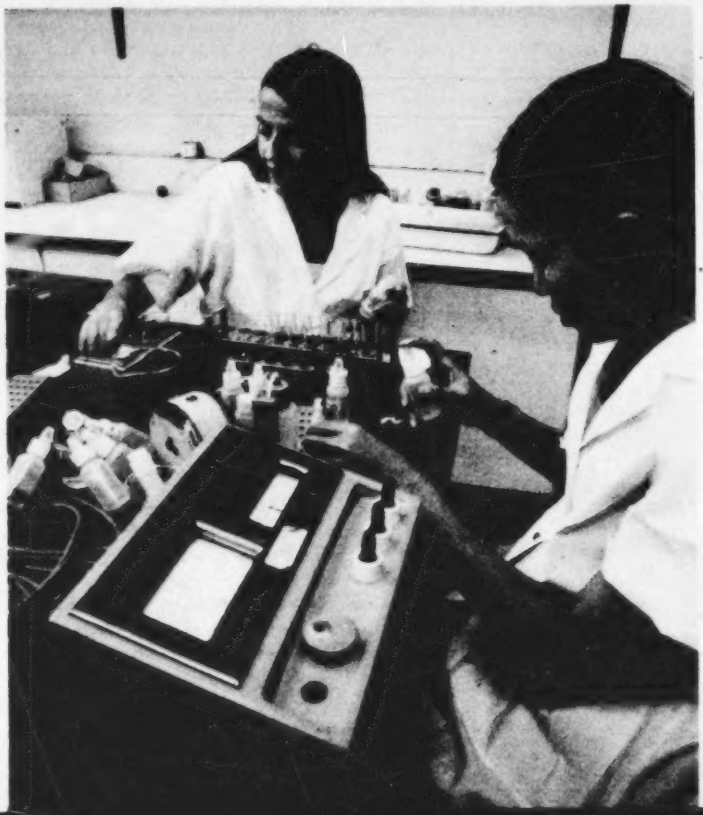
Your readjustment allowance, certain training allowances, and a portion of your monthly living allowance are subject to Federal income tax. Because of the level of your Peace Corps income, it is doubtful that you would be required to pay much income tax, if any, if you have no outside income.

At the end of each tax year, your Country Director will provide you with a W-2 form reflecting your readjustment allowance accrued during that tax year and information concerning the taxable portion of other allowances received. In the event you are required to pay taxes, you may utilize your readjustment allowance for this purpose.

Depending on your state of residence, you may also be required to pay state tax. You will need to obtain the necessary information and forms yourself.

Generally, you will not be required to pay income tax to the country in which you serve.

The measurement of malnutrition of some children in Thailand is concentrated on by PCV Joyce Osborn and her co-worker.



YOUR HEALTH

The Peace Corps maintains a comprehensive preventive and curative program to help you protect and maintain your health. This program includes medical and dental evaluations prior to training; a carefully-maintained immunization schedule; continual health education in-country; periodic physical and laboratory examinations; and medical care as indicated.

However, there are certain restrictions on the Peace Corps' financial obligation. It will not generally assume the costs of care for the following:

1. illness or injury existing prior to training;
2. illness or injury incurred in the United States during activities unrelated to Peace Corps service;
3. illness or injury incurred at any time as a result of misconduct—e.g., an act intended to injure oneself or another person.

If a disability incurred during service should persist or become manifest after your service has ended, you might be entitled to benefits under the Federal Employees Compensation Act. You will become eligible for FECA-paid medical care or compensation, or both, only *after* your Peace Corps service is terminated. To make your claim, submit Office of Federal Employees Compensation form CA-1 when the injury or illness is detected. In addition, a report form certifying that an accident or illness has been sustained (CA-2) is required. Have the Peace Corps Medical Officer or the Country Director complete form CA-2 as soon as possible after you sustain an accident or illness of any kind. These forms are available from Training Project Directors, Country Directors, and Medical Officers. After you terminate you may obtain them, with specific instructions, by writing to the Health Services Division, Office of Administration and Finance, ACTION, Washington, D.C. 20525.

Just prior to completing your overseas service you will undergo a thorough physical examination. At that time, make sure that every illness or injury you have sustained has been reported. Because neither the Peace Corps nor FECA provides coverage for the three exceptions listed, you may wish to retain any personal health insurance you have throughout your entire service.

The Peace Corps makes available to Volunteers and trainees terminating overseas a low-cost health and accident policy that provides coverage while en route between the host country and the United States. It may also be purchased to cover special leave in the United States prior to extended service of a year or more overseas. This coverage is for illness or accident not related to Peace Corps service and is for a minimum of three months and a maximum of six months. If you do not have private health insurance, you are urged to take advantage of this opportunity to subscribe.

A Peace Corps physician or nurse will be available for each country to assist you in protecting and maintaining your health and to provide primary care and medical advice when needed. However, maintaining good health

is one of *your* principal responsibilities so that you can carry out your volunteer assignment effectively. Conditions requiring prolonged or special care may necessitate evacuation to another country or to the United States, where medical staff will make appropriate arrangements for you.

Immunizations do not always guarantee full protection and there are no vaccines for gastro-intestinal diseases. However assiduously the Peace Corps attempts to discharge its responsibility, it cannot keep you well. The effectiveness of the preventive program depends to a great extent on the precautions you take personally to avoid illness. And remember to be attuned to your mental needs as well as to your physical needs. In a totally new environment, you may find yourself reacting to situations in ways unfamiliar to you. The pamphlet, *Adapting Overseas*, will give you some idea about what to expect in terms of your reactions overseas and some guidance in coping with your feelings and frustrations. The *Peace Corps Guide to Health* is a basic health manual containing information applicable in many countries, supplementing the country-specific manuals distributed overseas. Both booklets will be mailed to you before you leave home or made available at the staging/training site. Take them with you and use them as a reference overseas. If you follow the preventive program, taking simple precautions, especially in regard to water treatment and sanitation, and see your medical officer for counsel or treatment when indicated, you need not be unduly concerned about your health.

International Certificate of Vaccination ("WHO" Card)

Your International Certificate of Vaccination is your record of immunizations, and the only one that is accepted internationally. This card will be given to you at Staging. Carry it with you when you travel and guard it carefully. If you lose it you may have to repeat shots, with possible travel delays. Consult your Peace Corps Medical Officer. Refusal to get immunizations during staging or in-country can be cause for termination from Peace Corps.

Disease Identity Card ("Exposure Card")

You may be given a card showing the length of time you have spent in areas where certain diseases are endemic. It, too, is important; it is a diagnostic aid for the physician who treats you after you leave the Peace Corps.

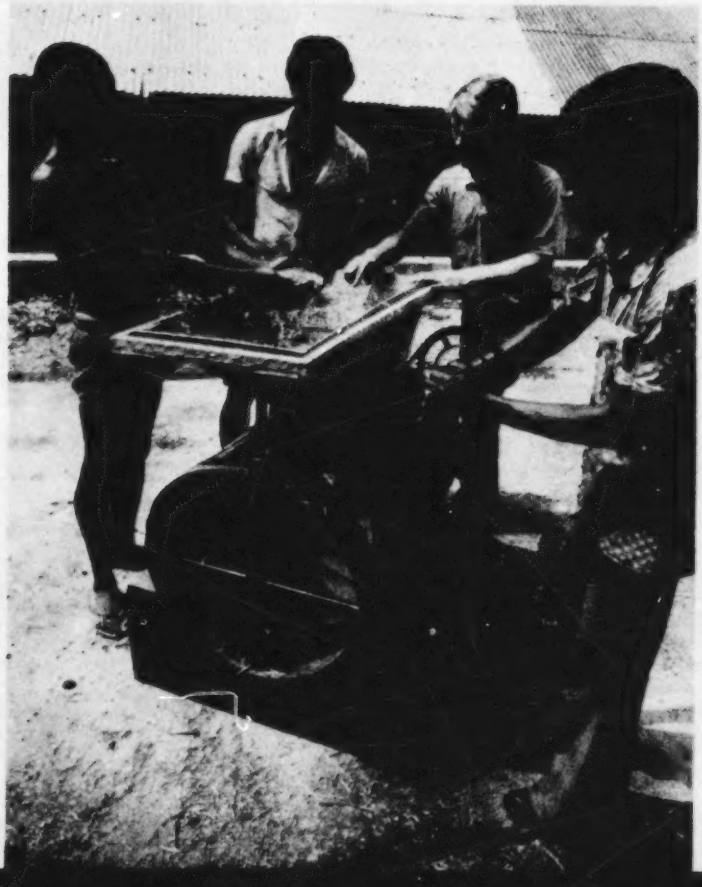
Volunteers with Families

Children who accompany their parents during their Peace Corps service (including staging and training), or who are born to or legally adopted by a Volunteer parent married to a non-Volunteer spouse during the

parent's service, will be entitled to the same health care as Volunteers. However, adopted children must be medically cleared and Peace Corps can not cover congenital defects. In addition, children will be provided dental care during the parents' training and service. The Peace Corps will also provide your children with medical care after your Peace Corps service, if necessary, for injuries or illnesses directly related to environmental living conditions overseas. Disability compensation payments, however, cannot be paid for your children.

In the event of medical evacuation of any member of the family from the host country, the Peace Corps generally will provide travel and allowances for the Volunteer and, in the case of a child, for that child and one of the parents. If it is determined that either parent or a child is medically unfit to return overseas, the service of the Volunteer family will usually be terminated.

Arnold Detlaff, a mechanical engineer volunteer teaches the design and construction of simple agricultural machines such as this winnower.



ON STAYING OR LEAVING

Transfer, Resignation and Early Termination

A Volunteer may resign at any time. However, the Peace Corps assumes that you volunteered with an honest intention to serve for the duration of the term of service and expects you to honor that commitment.

A Peace Corps Country Director may return a Volunteer to the United States with a recommendation that his service be terminated. The Peace Corps may also assign any Volunteer to another job in the same or a different country. A Volunteer may also request a transfer to other work in the same or a different country.

A Volunteer who wants to resign, or whose service a Country Director recommends be terminated, will always have the opportunity, if he or she chooses, to discuss the situation with Peace Corps staff members in Washington. Volunteers have found this opportunity for counseling to be valuable. Sometimes the Country Director may request that the terminating Volunteer come to Washington for interviews.

Before the early terminating Volunteer leaves the host country, the Country Director will show him or her a brief written statement of the reasons for the resignation and the Country Director's recommendation. The Volunteer may submit a written statement to be included with the papers sent to Washington by the Country Director.

During discussions in Washington, consideration may be given to transferring the Volunteer to another country in the same or a different region. A Volunteer interested in a transfer should realize, however, that a transfer is approved only in those cases where it appears likely that his or her reasons for terminating from the first country will not recur in the new country. For this reason, and because they often entail an extension of service and additional training, cases of transfer are rare.

The Director of the Peace Corps will review any decision adverse to the Volunteer if the Volunteer requests it in writing within two weeks after being advised of the Peace Corps' decision.

A Volunteer has a right to appeal the decision of the Country Director to terminate. A Volunteer who wishes to avail him or herself of this right may request consultation with the Peace Corps staff in Washington. During the stay in Washington, the Volunteer will prepare a written statement setting forth reasons for reversing the Country Director's decision. The Director of the Peace Corps will make a final determination on the appeal. Alternatively, if a Volunteer wishing to return directly home may submit the statement of appeal by mail within two weeks of the Peace Corps' decision to terminate. The statement should be directed to the Associate Director/International Operations, ACTION, Washington, D.C. 20525.

Extension of Service or Re-enrollment

The Peace Corps encourages Volunteers who have the capacity to sustain their commitment and to serve effectively for an additional period to consider extending their regular term of service or re-enrolling for a new term of service. To extend, you should inform your Country Director at least two months before the end of your original term, since your request for an extension will require not only his or her approval, but also the approval of your host country supervisors.

A Volunteer who extends for a year or more may take up to 30 days of special leave in the United States, or in any other part of the world. Special leave must be taken prior to the final three months of extended

In Lobatse, Botswana, PCV Thomas Koon and his Botswana colleague examine blueprints as part of the planning of housing, economic and financial studies for the town council.

service and it is not counted as part of your extended service. Thus, if you take 30 days of special leave, your extended service must normally end at least 13 months after your original termination date. A Volunteer who takes special leave will be given a Government Travel Request (GTR) for transportation costs, as long as it does not exceed the costs of round-trip, direct, economy air transportation from the country of assignment to his or her home of record in the United States. The Volunteer continues to receive living and readjustment allowances, plus $12.00

Raber Wharton, PCV in Barbados, visits day care centers and children's homes, conducting a study on malnutrition. She also is writing a pre-school curriculum and a TV documentary on day care.

per day as a special leave allowance. An extending Volunteer entitled to special leave may receive up to one-third of the accumulated readjustment allowance under the same procedure applicable to Volunteers who complete their term of service.

Rather than extend, you may wish to transfer directly to another Peace Corps country for a full term of service or re-enroll at a later date. If interested, you should discuss these alternatives with your Country Director at least three months in advance of your completion of service date. For direct transfers and re-enrollment to the original country of assignment within one year, you should contact the Office of Special Services. If you wish to re-enroll in another country, you should address your request to the Office of Recruitment, ACTION, Washington, D.C. 20525, or send it through the Country Director if you are still overseas.

Re-enrollment for service in the same *country* to begin *within* a year after the end of the first term will generally not require the Volunteer to participate in a new training program or go through the regular qualifying process. Training and selection probably *will* be required if re-enrollment is for service in a different country or is to begin after a break in service of over a year.

COMPLETION OF SERVICE

Several weeks before your service ends you will receive information and instructions concerning termination procedures. Some of the points mentioned earlier in this Handbook are important enough at the time of your termination to be repeated:

Your life insurance coverage ends 60 days after the end of your service if you terminate overseas; or 15 days after the end of your service if you terminate in the United States.

You will automatically receive a check representing one-third of the net amount in your readjustment allowance account which you may use for travel or in any way you wish. Approximately six weeks after your termination the final portion of your readjustment allowance, along with a statement of your account, will be mailed to your home.

On termination, you will be required to sign a statement indicating that you have no outstanding debts in the country, either to the Peace Corps, to fellow Volunteers, to host country nationals or to others. If you have not taken care of all debts and the Peace Corps has to pay them to avoid embarrassment to its program, such payments will be deducted from your readjustment allowance account.

You will be allowed to bring 36 pounds of accompanied excess baggage with you on your return to the U.S., in addition to the standard baggage allowance, or you will have the option of receiving a termination allowance in local currency equivalent to the cost of shipping 36 pounds of accompanied excess baggage by air.

If you have not already done so, you should insure those personal effects you are sending back to your home. The Peace Corps cannot accept responsibility for your effects or for any loss or damage to them. In addition, you should seriously consider health and accident insurance coverage for your return trip home as the Peace Corps will generally not provide medical coverage after you terminate, except for service-related illness or injuries.

Familiarize yourself with United States customs and Department of Agriculture regulations which apply to any returning United States resident. This can save you considerable embarrassment on your arrival in the United States. Customs brochures are generally available through your Country Director or through any American Embassy or Consulate.

OVERSEAS STAFF

Each country staff includes a Director and a staff of administrative and program support officers. These may include a Deputy Director, and Associate Directors, who provide professional programming and Volunteer job support in particular program areas such as agriculture, education, health or administration and Peace Corps physicians or nurses. Increasingly, these staff members are citizens of the host country.

To find its overseas staff members, the Peace Corps conducts a continuous nation-wide "talent search". Each prospective Country Director or staff member goes to Washington for a series of interviews. Once approved, the staff member will begin training with a staff orientation in Washington designed to give a broad overview of the Peace Corps and an opportunity to examine in greater depth the role to be assumed as a member of an overseas staff. Depending on personal training needs, additional training in programming, management, administration, language and other areas will be provided. Special training sessions are held for staff spouses.

Staff members come from as many backgrounds as the Volunteers themselves. They have included lawyers, executives from private industry, school principals, teachers, dentists, members of the clergy, Foreign Service Officers and returned Peace Corps Volunteers. The common quality demanded from all of them is leadership. The job is difficult, taxing and of crucial importance. On the staff member's leadership may depend the overall success or failure of present and future programs in the country. Directors and Associate Directors must devote long hours to meeting with Volunteers and host country officials. They will be caught up in paper work, logistics management, program development—with a significant measure of counseling thrown in.

The Country Director

Although the American Ambassador has overall responsibility for all U.S. citizens in the host country, the Country Director deals directly with Peace Corps problems. The Director must administer current programs and set up new ones, keep in contact with ministries and host country officials and also remain in touch with Volunteers in the field. Seminars, conferences, visitors from—and visits to—Washington also draw on the Director's time. With the help of the Peace Corps Physician the Director is responsible for the Volunteers' health, for their conduct, for their safety and protection, and for seeing that the Volunteers' performance and the host country supervision is satisfactory.

The Country Director and staff provide general guidance to the Volunteers, but they rely heavily on each Volunteer's desire and ability to do an effective job. If a Volunteer's performance is unsatisfactory, the Country Director may change the Volunteer's assignment or return him or her to the United States for reassignment or termination.

Before each group of Volunteers arrives, the Peace Corps staff must make sure the jobs are suitable and the living conditions adequate. They

are also responsible for maintaining a spirit of understanding and cooperation among the agencies with which Volunteers work.

Like Volunteers, Country Directors and other staff members have no diplomatic privileges or immunities, no PX or commissary privileges. They do not draw hardship pay in places where other American officials do. They may not use the diplomatic pouch or the Army Post Office for personal mail and are expected to live modestly.

They are salaried employees, and many of them have interrupted careers to serve overseas in the Peace Corps. A major prerequisite for the job of Country Director is high motivation—the same sort of motivation that is looked for in Volunteers.

The Medical Officer

Each country maintains a medical office staffed by a physician or nurse who as designated Medical Officer is responsible for administering a comprehensive preventive and curative health care program. The most important aspect of this program is prevention. The Medical Officer is responsible for designing a preventive program that will assist you in protecting and maintaining your health. This includes continuing health education, site visits to detect environmental and occupational hazards, immunizations and prophylactic treatment against endemic disease and periodic physical exams and tests for early detection of disease. The medical officer will also be the principal provider of care when necessary, utilizing any specialists and local facilities available as needed. Should you require care not available in the country, the medical officer is responsible for developing plans for emergency and routine medical

Spanish and Industrial Arts are subjects taught by PCV Phil Valenzuela in Antigua.

evacuations to a nearby country, a U.S. military facility abroad, or the United States.

You can be assured that your medical records and the relationship between yourself and the medical officers is a confidential one. However, health problems occur in a social context and related effects may impair your total effectiveness or potentially endanger the Peace Corps program. If the medical officer believes it necessary, you may be asked to talk to the Country Director or, with your permission, the medical officer may discuss implications of your problems with the Director.

In addition to the primary responsibilities for health care, the medical officer may also be involved in the development, planning and support of health projects in the country of assignment.

Two PCV's Carol Rushin and Barbara MacLeod are assigned to Department of Archeology in Belize. They are involved in locating, mapping and salvaging the caves of Belize.

VOLUNTEER SUPPORT

Family Emergencies

The Office of Special Services in Washington can assist you in handling certain kinds of personal problems, including all cases of emergency involving you or your family. Before leaving the United States, tell your family that they should contact Special Services immediately if an emergency, such as the serious illness or death of a member of your immediate family, arises. During working hours the telephone number is Area Code 202-254-7280 or 800-424-8580 Ext. 85. After normal working hours and on weekends and holidays, the Special Services Duty Officer may be contacted through a federal government switchboard at 202-638-2574. The 800 number is Toll Free.

If you are notified directly overseas of such a family emergency, notify your Country Director immediately. The Director will cable the Office of Special Services requesting that your family be contacted for additional information on and verification of the emergency situation. When necessary and if possible, your Country Director may also arrange for telephone calls to or from the United States.

In the event of a serious illness or death of a parent, sibling, or child of a Volunteer, emergency leave will be authorized and your transportation home provided by the Peace Corps. This leave is for a period of two weeks, including travel time, and only one emergency leave will be granted during a period of one year for a given emergency situation. A per diem allowance of $12.00, totalling $168.00 for the 14 days, will be provided. In the case of married couples, when both are Volunteers, the Country Director may determine on an individual basis whether the spouse and/or other family members should accompany the affected Volunteer to the United States.

Illness and injuries to Volunteers overseas are reported to Washington. If they are serious, Washington will notify your family, unless requested not to do so. If there is some general emergency in your area overseas, the Peace Corps will not initiate contact with your family unless you so request or unless it has specific information that your health or welfare is affected. Experience shows that unsolicited calls from Washington to report that Volunteers are well and safe usually create more anxiety than they allay.

If members of your family decide to visit you, the Peace Corps cannot provide their transportation or travel expenses. Neither the airlines nor Peace Corps have any special or reduced fare arrangements for Volunteers or their families.

Material Support

You are expected to get along with materials available to you in your environment as much as possible. When absolutely required, and available in no other way, a Peace Corps staff member may be able to obtain

small numbers of books, tools and other equipment. But this is the personal decision of the staff member.

For the same reasons, the Peace Corps will not normally provide additional shipping allowances for your personal books, equipment or other supplies, even though they may be useful in your assignment. Although a complete personal library may save time in your work, it may delay the day when your counterparts will have adequate libraries of their own. An important part of your job in the Peace Corps is learning for yourself and teaching others how to achieve success with minimum outside resources. The Peace Corps *cannot* provide equipment and supplies such as books for children you teach, tools to demonstrate new techniques to farmers or building materials for a community center you help plan.

Too often Volunteers fail to make use of the job-related technical information and assistance available to them in their host country. Local universities, government ministries, host country agencies and organizations, and in-country offices of organizations like AID, FAO, and WHO can frequently provide the best, most specific assistance possible. There is an added benefit in that these resources are also available to host country counterparts.

Technical information support for Volunteers is offered by ACTION

Peace Corps Volunteer Richard Williams of Long Beach, California works as an animal colony supervisor at the St. Louis Anemia and Malnutrition Research Center in Chiengmai, Thailand.

Planning advice on regulations and legal aspects such as land use, building permits and codes, fire safety and zoning is given by PCV Martin Nelson in Antigua.

through the Library, the Information Collection and Exchange (ICE), and Volunteers in Technical Assistance (VITA).

The ACTION Librarian answers approximately 100 requests each month on a variety of topics: building techniques, poultry raising, educational tools, nutrition programs, and so forth. The advice of ACTION specialists and experts from other organizations is sought in answering these requests.

A number of basic technical manuals are available directly from the Library; bibliographical information on other materials available from publishers is also provided. Requests for assistance from the Library should be channeled through your Peace Corps staff overseas.

Peace Corps-generated information, primarily from the field, is available through the ICE. ICE materials include monographs and manuals covering a wide range of technical topics. To obtain up-to-date listings of available manuals and reprints, write to Information Collection and Exchange, Office of Multilateral and Special Programs, ACTION/Peace Corps, Washington, D.C. 20525.

VITA is a non-profit, private organization through which Peace Corps, under contract, can obtain professional technical advice for Volunteers. VITA processes many Volunteer requests each year.

THE YEARS AHEAD

Much has been written about the re-entry of the Peace Corps Volunteer into American society. In the early years, the public was concerned because of stories of a few Volunteers who had extreme difficulty in making the transition from a foreign culture back to what they found at home. While as many as half of all returning Volunteers apparently experience some, usually minor, readjustment problems, the fact is that most soon become involved in careers, jobs, and community programs that reflect a basic interest in social change and very often draw upon that experience gained while serving abroad.

More than 63,000 volunteers had returned home by the end of 1976. The most recent data indicates that more than half of all returned Volunteers had continued their education and close to two-thirds had chosen or planned service-oriented careers, including about a quarter of that number who had entered the teaching profession.

Career Planning

If you are beginning to think about your post-service career plans, the Outplacement Counseling Team within the Office of Personnel Management can provide you with up-to-date information in a variety of career, employment and educational areas. Many returned Peace Corps Volunteers have taken the opportunity to work on the social and economic problems of our own nation. Through ACTION, you can apply to transfer into VISTA or any other voluntary effort to help Americans to a better life as you helped people in developing nations. Your overseas experience may be of special value in dealing with the diverse ethnic and cultural groups interacting in ACTION domestic programs.

In the area of employment, services include assistance in resume preparation, interview techniques, information regarding employment trends in specific fields and, where necessary, counseling in how and where to obtain additional skills needed to better realize eventual career goals. Terminating Volunteers are encouraged to send the Outplacement Team a Federal Government resume (Standard Form 171) for inclusion in the Talent Bank, a file utilized by employers seeking qualified candidates for specific positions.

The Outplacement Office publishes the HOTLINE, a weekly bulletin of job opportunities for former Volunteers. At the time you receive the final portion of your readjustment allowance, your name will be added to the mailing list for HOTLINE. You will continue to receive the bulletin for one year following completion of your Peace Corps service.

In the academic area, the Outplacement Team responds to inquiries regarding undergraduate and graduate programs, vocational and technical apprenticeship opportunities, non-traditional programs of education, and school admission trends. Information on educational programs of particular interest to Volunteers appears in the Education Column featured in

INTERACTION, a monthly publication about Volunteers in ACTION which you will receive throughout your service and for one year following your termination.

The Outplacement Team annually sends information to your Country Director regarding various examinations, including the Graduate Record Examination, the Admission Test for Graduate Study in Business, the Law School Admission Test, the Medical College Admission Test, and the Foreign Service Officer Exam. Copies of the College Board Student Bulletin (CEEB) containing information on undergraduate admission exams are also sent overseas. Many of these exams can be administered abroad. Do not hesitate to contact the Outplacement Office if your Peace Corps Office does not have information on the exam you wish to take.

A Presidential Executive Order has established special procedures for employment in the Federal Civil Service for any former Volunteer who has satisfactorily completed his or her term of Peace Corps service and is qualified for an available job. This means that Peace Corps Volunteers receive non-competitive eligibility for appointment to a Federal position. They can accept a position without, literally, competing against other people for that position. The non-competitive eligibility period normally runs for a period of twelve months following termination. This is not a guarantee of a job in the Federal Service nor does it provide an exemption from required examinations. Under this order, any former Volunteer employed by the United States Government is entitled to have any period of satisfactory Peace Corps service credited for purposes of retirement, seniority, reduction in force, leave and other privileges based on length of government service. If you are eligible for appointment under this Executive Order, a statement to that effect will be included in the Description of Service Statement which you will receive immediately prior to your termination.

As a returned Volunteer, you are encouraged to stop in or call the offices of the Outplacement Team to talk with a Career Counselor about your post-service plans.

GPO 925-087

There is no discrimination toward race, color, national origin, age, political beliefs, sex or religion. All services are administered on a non-discriminatory basis. Anyone who feels he/she has been discriminated against may write to OEO.